

LET'S EXPLORE---

High Point and Sussex County

BY JOHN T. CUNNINGHAM

MAKE no mistake about it: You'll know when you've seen the "top of New Jersey." It isn't something you stumble over all of a sudden, something you see briefly and then can't find it again. Once the High Point monument marking the "top" appears as a slender needle stretching up from the Sussex County horizon it remains a beckoning will-o-the-wisp, like a command to drive upward.

Sussex County's winding roads shift the monument quickly. Sometimes after a dip down a rolling hill the 220-foot tower appears to the left. Then, a couple of hills and a few curves later, the spire looms, slightly

(Continued on Following Page)

High Point monument viewed from portico of lodge, former home of Col. and Mrs. Anthony R. Kuser, who donated area to state as a public park.

Swing Through Lake



Mrs. Daniel Van Duzer stands near water wheel outside Old Bailey's Mill in Glenwood. Built in 1805 and in continuous operation until 1918, the mill has been converted into a home for the Van Duzers.

Staff Photos, Dorer



Headstones in De Kays Cemetery mark graves of village founders. One at left is that of Thomas De Kay who traded farm at Broadway and Canal street, New York City, for 1,000 acres in Sussex County.



Bridge, perfectly shaped trees, a quiet stream and grazing cattle are

(Continued from Preceding Page)

larger, to the right. It persists in its invitation to climb, regardless of its shifting. Any one who has visited the 11,000-acre park surrounding the monument will find the urge especially impelling; there is nothing quite like it in all of Jersey.

A quarter-century is being marked at High Point State Park this Summer. The area was given to the state in 1923 by the late Colonel and Mrs. Anthony R. Kuser of Bernardsville and 25 years of steady development, climaxed last Summer by a new road down the north face of the mountain have turned the area into a great public playground area.

The "Top" is within quick reach of metropolitan areas by way of heavily traveled-route 23 through Mountain View and Sussex. Much more traffic-free, picturesque and diversified is a trip from Morristown up through the lake country and around to the "back" of the park through the onion country just over the border in New York. This route offers an opportunity to see a different part of Sussex County and gives the traveler a chance to test the new road up the mountain from Port Jervis, N. Y.

FROM Morristown, a good road leads up through hotel-studded Mt. Freedom and over an undulating route to the intersection with Route 10 in Succasunna, and eventually with Route 6 at Ledgewood. A turn into

Route S-31 at the Netcong traffic circle starts the trip to the back door of High Point Park.

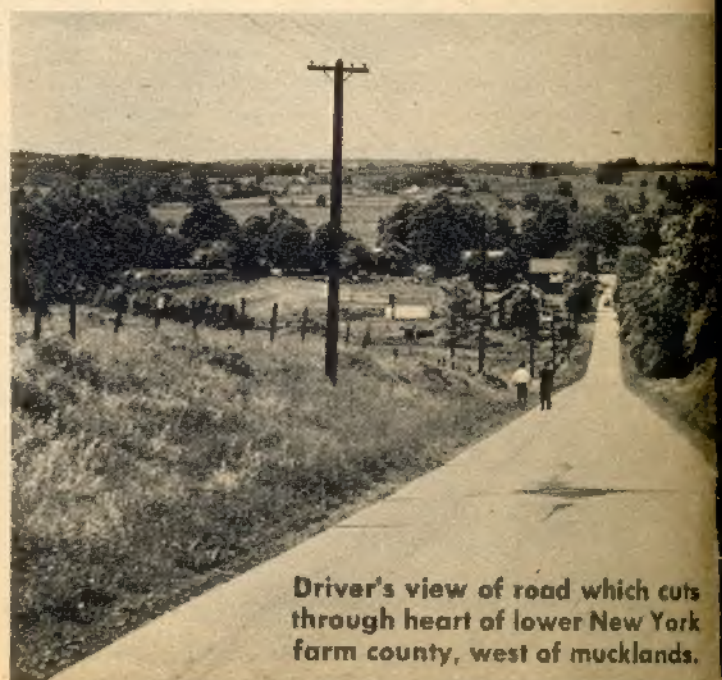
Three miles north of Netcong Route 31, turn right for well-ordered Lake Lackawanna, whose neat cottages and wooded shoreline perfectly into the foothills of Spar Mountain. Past the lake a tunnel leads under the "cutoff" built in 1910 to shorten the Buffalo to New York trip of the Lackawanna Railroad. Once known as the "eighth wonder of the world," the cutoff is one of the largest fill railroad constructions in the country.

A short distance beyond, a left turn into a macadam road off the concrete goes past the farm operated by the Hudson Guild Settlement House. New York for city families. Symbolizing the work done on the tract is a man with a pitchfork on a directional sign in front of the farm.

The macadam soon gives way to hard gravel and winds upward until it reaches the ridge overlooking Lake Mohawk, then levels off to Spar Mountain. Up through the Wallkill Valley, past Ogdensburg and Franklin, some of the zinc and limestone workings which have given the valley prosperity can be seen to the left. The white limestone cliffs are especially clear. South of Franklin Route 23 is joined as it is as Hamburg, to the home of Daniel Haines, Governor of New Jersey in 1843 and an early advocate of a free school system.



Lake Marcia as it appears from base of High Point monument which overlooks 50-mile radius.



Driver's view of road which cuts through heart of lower New York farm country, west of mucklands.

e Country Picturesque



Subjects in this pastoral scene typical of Sussex County near Glenwood.

JUST beyond the Governor Haines Mansion a hill rises and dips and the first concrete road to the right after the rise is passed takes the autoist into pastoral regions as perfect as a landscape painting. The road to McAfee, Vernon and Glenwood is untouched by the rushing of the 20th Century and the inescapable feeling persists that here is an area which can survive anything.

Rolling fields where stallions romp, broad meadows where cattle peacefully graze, rippling streams through pleasant groves—these mark the Hamburg to Glenwood route. Large comfortable farmhouses hint that they have histories but their owners are too busy to jot them down. Spacious barns and big silos attest to the importance of the dairy industry.

McAfee has a past, but the only reminders are a limestone cliff and buildings left by Bethlehem Steel Co. when it stopped operating the limestone quarry nearly 25 years ago. The abandoned brick powerhouse and the big wooden building which housed the stone crusher contrast oddly in the fields with farm outbuildings. McAfee also once thrilled to harness races where farmers vied, but that too now exists only in the memory of old-timers.

Vernon, with its century-old church and a country store which has been in the Denton family since 1825, strengthens the belief that this part of Sussex County is unchanging.

However, Richard Denton Wallace, who has operated the store since 1898, says "lots of new folks are coming in." Local historians maintain that Washington brought his army down through this valley on the trip to Newburgh, N. Y., from Morristown in 1782.

IN Vernon a left turn heads north for Glenwood, pre-Revolutionary War village. To the right up the valley near the New York state line lies De Kays, named after Thomas De Kays. According to local people De Kays swapped a farm at Broadway and Canal street in New York for 1,000 acres surrounding De Kays. An overgrown cemetery well off the road on private property contains graves of descendants, including that of Thomas in 1758, and Captain George De Kays, who died in 1757.

Glenwood, now an apple and peach center, has agricultural roots reaching deep into the 18th Century. The oldest building is the Zimmerman house, but equally interesting is the old mill formerly owned by the late Captain Daniel Bailey. The mill, built in 1805, ran for over 100 years until it ceased working in 1918. Several years ago the mill became the home of Daniel Van Duzer, direct descendant of Captain Bailey, and Mrs. Van Duzer.

Over the state border north of Glenwood the black mucklands stretch away from the road and rows of

onions, celery and lettuce run with uncanny straightness as far as the eye can see. The black loam extends for nine miles north, centering in the town of Florida, and the season reaches its peak in mid-August. In former years great onion festivals were held in the region to mark the harvest time, but they have not been observed the last two years.

A left turn is made in Pine Island at a "stop" sign intersection for the trip westward to Port Jervis, some of it past tremendous onion and celery fields. Through the mucklands the road dips and rises dizzily and the farmers tell of the "sink hole" which plagued engineers 20 years ago when the route was under construction. Every method of fill was tried: Rocks, boulders, huge trees. Each day's fill disappeared overnight. Finally, quantities of tree limbs were used to "float" the highway over the region.

UPWARD from the onion meadows the High Point monument appears as a tiny speck in the blue distance and remains a constant focal point as the route circles through farmland into Port Jervis. In Route 6 east of Port Jervis, as the road begins its descent into the valley, the land drops sharply away from the highway and a breathtaking view of three states is the result. The valley's tiny houses, the railroad, Port Jervis, the intersection of the Neversink and Delaware Rivers and the mountains of Jersey, New

York and Pennsylvania appear in miniature.

Near the foot of the hill, where the concrete broadens into a wide triangle, the road to the left is the "new" route to High Point. Straight ahead, a left turn into the cemetery just over the bridge will take the traveler to the marker where three states meet at the joining of the Neversink and the Delaware.

"New" is used advisedly for the route up to High Point, because although in most places it follows the old road, it has been so widened and improved that for all purposes but a line on a map it is new. Bad curves have been eliminated and steep grades have been modified. Especially missed by those who like danger in their driving will be "Fiddler's Elbow," the right angle turn in the middle of the old road, now replaced by a straight slice of macadam. As the route nears the summit, Lake Steenykill can be seen to the left.

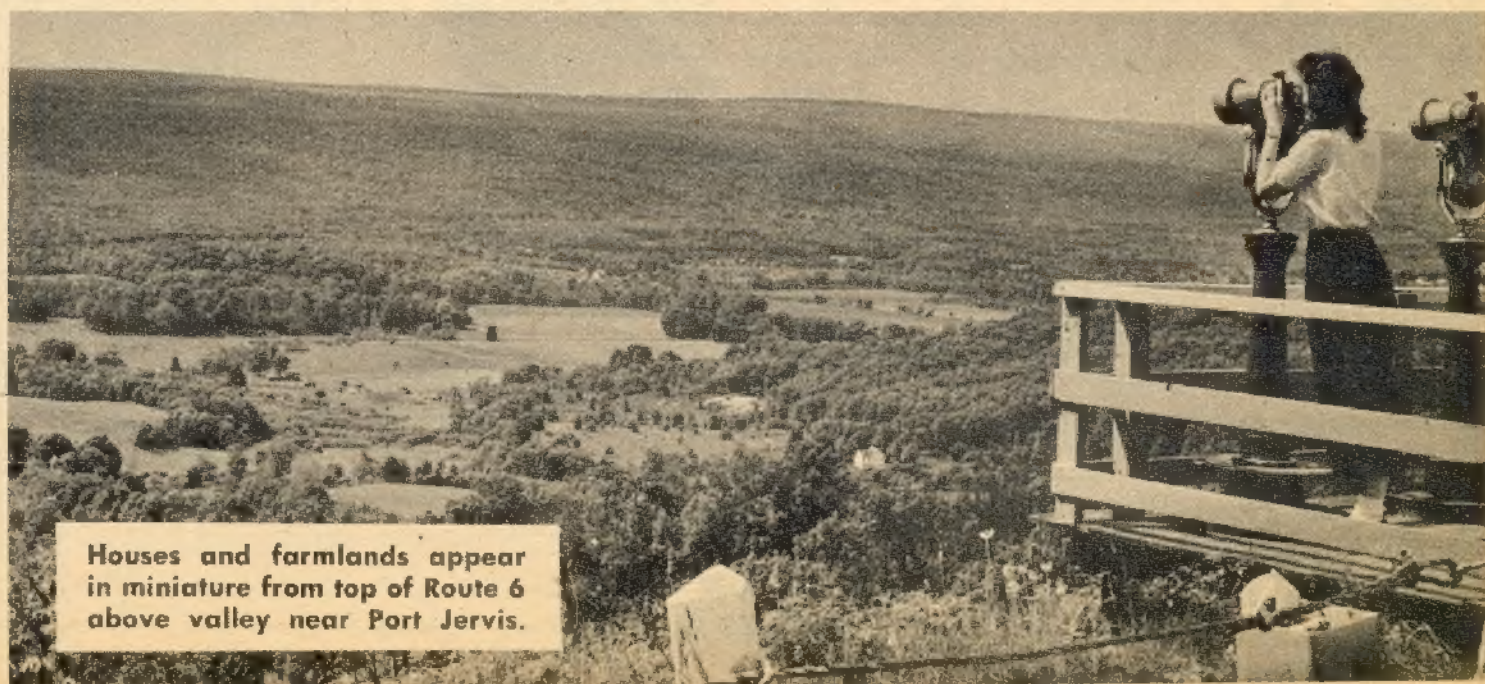
The park offers unlimited pleasures, ranging from the athletic—swimming, boating, hiking, fishing, camping—to the sedentary and scenic. Picnic spots are numerous. The broad porch of the lodge, former residence of Col. and Mrs. Kuser, offers a postcardlike view of the monument across Lake Marcia or a far-away look at the Pocono Mountains.

Obviously a climb to the monument,

(Continued on Following Page)



Visitors stand at Tri-State marker in Port Jervis, where the Neversink and Delaware Rivers meet. Junction also marks boundaries of the states of New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania.



Houses and farmlands appear in miniature from top of Route 6 above valley near Port Jervis.

LET'S EXPLORE— HIGH POINT AND SUSSEX COUNTY

(Continued from Preceding Page)

dedicated to "New Jersey's heroes by land, sea and air in all wars of our country," is a must. The walk around the base of the 34-foot square obelisk looks out over 50 miles of scenery in every direction. A fee is charged for admission to the monument itself and the view from its top is worth while.

FROM the monument the park's Scenic drive leads southward to an intersection with Route 23 and the trip into the valley. In Colesville, a right turn off Route 23 heads for Plumbsock and Beemerville through more of Sussex County's delightful dairylands. The first road to the left on this route, marked "Sussex," leads past the area where General Hugh Judson Kilpatrick in 1878 held the famous GAR encampment, which still is remembered in the county.

General Kilpatrick, after a brilliant Civil War career, returned to Sussex County. He took an active part in politics and his name became synonymous with all Sussex County activities. Then in August, 1878, he invited the GAR to hold its encampment on his farm. Contemporary accounts tell of crowds ranging up to 40,000, the greatest ever assembled up to that time in North

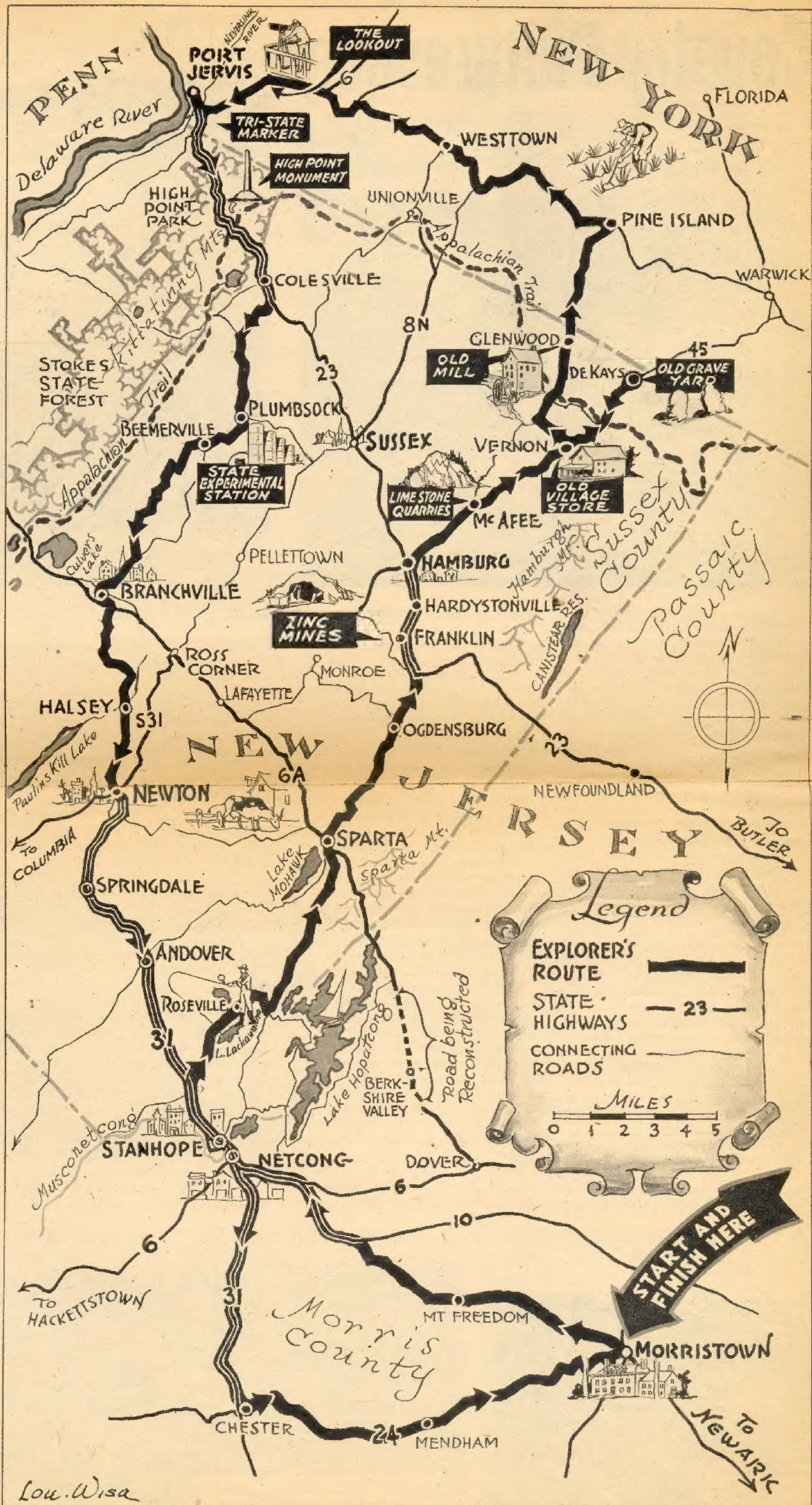


Cultivating field in onion belt near Pine Island, N. Y.

Jersey, and of a sham battle which ruined the fields of the Kilpatrick farm. One story tells of the crowd, in its haste to leave when the encampment broke up, "raising such a cloud of dust that it turned the countryside for miles around from green to yellow."

Silos on the left in Beemerville mark the state agricultural experimental station. The road to the right fringes the foothills of the Kittatinny Mountains, atop of which runs the Appalachian Trail. In Branchville, a left turn at the building of Selected Risks, Inc., followed by a right turn two blocks beyond, will carry over Route S-31 for a traffic-free back route to Newton. A tree which appears to be almost in the center of the road beyond Route S-31 is the signal for a left turn, then the next right turn is the way to Newton. At Newton Route 31 is met for the ride back to Netcong.

In Netcong the traffic circle intersects with Route 6 will probably mean some slow driving, but most of the traffic can be left behind by continuing south on Route 31 to Chester. Then turn left on Route 24 and roll eastward to Morristown through some of Morris County's most pleasant farmlands.



Comparatively traffic-free is above tour which starts and ends at Morristown for trip to High Point.